



**CITY OF MIAMI BEACH**  
**Office of the City Manager**  
**Letter to Commission No. 084-2004**

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**To:** Mayor David Dermer and  
Members of the City Commission

**Date:** April 16, 2004

**From:** Jorge M. Gonzalez  
City Manager

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jorge", written over the printed name.

**Subject: WEEKLY UPDATE**

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The purpose of this LTC is to provide the Mayor and Commission with an update describing some of the areas the administration has recently been focusing on:

**Budget Preparations** – The Office of Budget and Performance Improvement (OBPI) continues to work on budget preparations with all City Departments for the next fiscal year. All departments have now turned in their budget requests with budget reviews scheduled to take place throughout the next several weeks. Briefings with the Commission will be scheduled for early June.

**Commission Retreat** – The leadership retreat for the Mayor and Commission has been scheduled and confirmed for Saturday, May 8 and Saturday, May 22, 2004 from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on both dates. Location is to be determined. The purpose of the retreat is to focus on improving our work together, goal alignment priority setting, strategic planning and visioning for the future. Dr. Rick Jensen, whom you each met with on March 15, will facilitate each session. Additional information and details will be provided to each of you prior to May 8.

**Quality of Life Issues** – I continue to met with staff from the Police, Neighborhood Services, Public Works and other City departments to focus on issues involved with improving the quality of life for all on Miami Beach.

**Potamkin Site** - On April 5, City staff and I traveled to Atlanta to meet with representatives from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the developer of the Potamkin site to review FTA funding requirements. The FTA expressed favorable comments in its initial review of the project and indicated the City would need to place emphasis on the transit elements of the project, focusing on their location, cost and use, and transit user profiles to determine the project's eligibility for FTA funding. Additionally, the parties will explore to what degree the Federal funding restrictions apply to the privately funded, non-transit portion of the project.

**City Wayfinding Signs** – Staff met with representatives from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) on April 6 to discuss issues related to the proposed Miami Beach sign to be located on the McArthur Causeway.

**Organizational Development** - As part of my ongoing organizational development efforts, I invited the Information Technology (IT) Department to join me for a brown bag lunch on April 6 to talk about issues that may be important to staff and the Department. My goal is to meet with all City Departments throughout the year in this informal setting to further open the lines of communication and make sure that staff at all levels have an opportunity to share information with me that may be important to them.

**Police Department** – Held a Police Retiree's Roll of Honor Ceremony on April 7 to honor those sworn police officers who have retired since year 2002. Names of the retirees were unveiled on the outside wall at the front of the Police Station in their honor. In addition, the Police Command Staff held a leadership retreat on April 12 to focus on improving issues related to the Department including: (1) Quality of Life issues; (2) Off-duty assignments; (3) Staffing issues and; (4) Update on the Department's Strategic Plan.

**Major Events Planning (MEP)** – Staff worked throughout the past several weeks to ensure that various special events held on Miami Beach were successful and have been meeting to plan and prepare for several major events that will be taking place on Miami Beach in the next couple of months, including the Memorial Day holiday weekend.

**Capital Improvement Projects** - The 42<sup>nd</sup> Street Streetscape work is proceeding with the water main now fully installed and permitted, and with the above ground work commencing in early May. The project is anticipated to be completed by the end of May, 2004.

**Hurricane Preparedness** – Staff has started to prepare for hurricane season and has scheduled the third annual City of Miami Beach Hurricane Information and Preparedness Fair to take place on Saturday, June 5, 2004 from 10 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. along the 1000 block of Lincoln Road. The purpose of the event is to reach out to the community and provide information on what the City does and what is suggested for residents and businesses to do, before during and after hurricanes in an effort to educate and protect our residents and businesses. In addition, a meeting with representatives from all the hotels is scheduled to take place on May 6 to provide them with important information to help them prepare.

**Risk Management** – The Risk Management Division has been working on the property insurance renewal process which includes a general review of all City locations, value assessment, and compliance with inspection recommendations from the insurance carrier. Initial indications are that the premium will be consistent with last year's.

**Union Contracts** – Staff from our Office of Labor Relations continues to meet separately with representatives from the Communications Workers of America (CWA) and ASFCME unions in the hopes of reaching fair agreements in the near future. A contract “signing” ceremony was held with the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) on April 7. In addition, staff from Labor Relations and Risk Management hosted representatives from the AFSCME Union National Headquarters the week of April 12 for a three day training program focused on safety in confined spaces. The training, funded through a Federal Grant Program afforded forty-two employees the opportunity to attend. As a result of the employees’ and Management’s response, and eagerness to receive additional training, AFSCME has offered to pursue other types of safety training in the future that will significantly enhance the employees ability to perform their jobs in a safe and risk free manner.

**Vote Miami Beach** – The Vote Miami Beach campaign was officially launched at the April 14 Commission meeting. Staff has been working with Commissioner Steinberg’s office on this ongoing campaign to create and stimulate awareness among Miami Beach residents about voting. To give Miami Beach residents a greater voice in local and national elections, an incentive program has been established to encourage residents to become a registered voter and to vote.

**Community Development Week** – Took place the week of April 12 – 16 with several events taking place to celebrate the achievements with the organizations that have helped the City provide outstanding services to Miami Beach residents, and have made the community a model across the country. Events included a community “mixer” where community partners presented information about their programs and accomplishments using CDBG and HOME funds; a health fair at the Miami Beach Community Health Center; and the presentation of the Community Heroes Award at the April 14 Commission meeting.

**Shane Watersports Center** – Staff from the Planning Department and I met with Debbie Liebowitz, Barry Klein, and Bruce Singer on April 15 to discuss issues related to the Shane Watersports Center. These Issues will be further discussed at the April 20 Planning Board meeting.

**Relay for Life** – The City’s fundraising efforts continue with several Departments continuing their events to benefit the Relay for Life program scheduled to take place on Memorial Field at Flamingo Park on May 15-16.

**Fire Department** – Miami Dade County contacted Fire Chief Floyd Jordan on April 16 and invited him to participate on their interview panel for the Miami Dade County Fire Chief. The panel will be interviewing nearly 30 candidates with the hope of identifying the top candidate by June 30, 2004.

**Florida League of Cities** – The Florida League of Cities contacted the City on April 16 to notify us that I have been selected as one of four finalists for their Florida Cities of Excellence Awards / City Manager of the Year Award. The winner will be announced at the Florida League of Cities Conference in Orlando on June 26, 2004.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me.

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